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TAGS: AORC UN KWMN PHUM

SUBJECT: URGENT DEMARCHE REQUESTED -- JUNE 19, 2008  
SECURITY COUNCIL THEMATIC DEBATE ON FOLLOW-UP TO SC  
RESOLUTION 1325 AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN CONFLICT AND  
POST-CONFLICT SITUATIONS.

REF: STATE 56632

¶1. This cable contains an action request. See paragraph 5.

¶2. Summary: Embassies Beijing, Moscow, Hanoi, and Jakarta are urgently requested to demarche host governments at the highest possible level to support consensus adoption on Thursday, June 19, of a U.S. resolution in the Security Council on Sexual Violence in Situations of Armed Conflict, and to recede from suggested amendments that would eliminate or weaken essential elements of the resolution.

¶3. Background. The United States holds the Security Council Presidency for June 2008 and pursuing a series of activities related to implementation of the recommendations in Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security. Secretary Rice has agreed to preside over a public debate in the Security Council this Thursday, June 19, on an important aspect of SC Resolution 1325: sexual violence in armed conflict situations. This will be a ministerial-level debate, and a number of foreign ministers have already confirmed their attendance.

¶4. In connection with this discussion, the U.S. has introduced a draft resolution. The original text of the U.S. draft resolution is set forth in Reftel. The draft resolution is in the final stages of negotiations, and discussions are being held at the Permanent Representative level in New York in an effort to resolve the few remaining differences. China and Russia, supported by Indonesia and Vietnam, are opposing three important elements of the resolution: a Statement of the Council's willingness to consider appropriate steps to address widespread and/or systematic sexual violence when addressing specific threats to international peace and security (OP 1); a statement of the Council's intention to consider the appropriateness of sanctions against perpetrators of such violence when establishing state-specific sanctions regimes (OP 5); and a request to the Secretary General to report on situations in which sexual violence has been widely or systematically employed (OP 13).

¶5. Action Request: The planned adoption of this resolution by consensus is closely linked with the Secretary's presence at the Security Council. Department asks posts to draw from the following talking points to host governments, and to make the demarcations on Wednesday, July 18, at the highest possible level.

¶6. BEGIN TALKING POINTS.

-- You may know that during our June 2008 Security Council Presidency, the United States has decided to focus on follow up to SC Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security, with an emphasis on sexual violence in situations of armed

conflict.

-- This Thursday, June 19, Secretary of State Rice will preside over a Security Council thematic debate on these issues. In connection with that discussion, the U.S. has introduced a resolution.

-- Negotiations are in the final stages. Delegations have worked constructively to arrive at a strong text. But a small number of remaining differences threaten to prevent consensus adoption of the resolution. We appeal to your government to instruct your United Nations mission to join consensus on this resolution.

--- This resolution is fully consistent with a number of resolutions the UNSC has already adopted by consensus. Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security, which was adopted in 2000 and to which this resolution is a follow-up, is an important example. Resolution 1612, which passed in 2005, calls for monitoring and reporting on the protection of children during armed conflict. Resolution 1674, adopted in 2006, deals with the situation of civilians in armed conflict.

--- Your delegation in New York has objected to language in OP 1 and OP 5 of the draft text that states the Council's willingness to consider appropriate steps, including possible sanctions directed against the perpetrators of widespread and/or systematic sexual violence, when dealing with specific conflict situations.

--- But these provisions do not commit the Council to take any particular steps. They merely affirm the Council's intention to "consider" whether such measures are appropriate in future situations.

--- Second, these provisions simply restate a principle that the Security Council is already observing in practice. For instance, the situations in Darfur, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Liberia, and Sierra Leone are under the Council's scrutiny because of threats to peace and security that consisted in part of, or were aggravated by widespread atrocities against civilian populations, including sexual violence, and putting an end to such violence has been an important goal of the missions established by Security Council resolutions to deal with these situations.

--- There is a specific and recent precedent for the Security Council's willingness to consider sanctions against perpetrators of sexual violence in armed conflict. SC Resolution 1807, adopted in March of this year to address the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, lists those who commit serious violations of international law by targeting women and children for sexual violence in violation of international law among those on whom sanctions may be imposed under the resolution.

--- Your delegation is also objecting to language in OP 13 that requests the Secretary-General to report to the Council on situations of armed conflict in which sexual violence has been widely or systematically employed against civilians. But this language does not prejudge any particular situation, and it does not tell the Secretary General what information he should report. It is designed simply to ensure that information is reported to the Security Council so that the Council can have the information it needs to fulfill its functions.

--- We believe the credibility of the Security Council is at stake on this resolution. The Security Council made clear in 2000 that the situation of women in conflict situations is central to the issue of peace and security and that it belongs on the Security Council agenda. The Security Council often takes follow up action on a given country or regional issue. Ever since SC Resolution 1325 passed in 2000, many have praised the resolution but have noted that its good precepts need to be implemented.

--- What we are asking for now is a very modest step forward

--- a statement of commitment, and reporting and information sharing. It is important that the Council not be seen as taking a step backward on the issue of sexual violence in conflict situations by passing a resolution that calls attention to the problem but does little or nothing toward solving it.

END TALKING POINTS.  
RICE